



APRIL 1, 2024
FINAL PROGRAM REPORT, APRIL 1st, 2023 – MARCH 31st, 2024

FORTY YEARS OF GRATITUDE

One might expect organizational inertia to kick in after four decades. Even if we wanted to lay back and rest on tried and true precedents, the world isn't giving us the chance. We are adapting to a dizzying array of external challenges. But new adventures are beckoning. We are lucky for things, and forever thankful.

To stay relevant and impactful, we had to plant many seeds this past year, spawning new approaches to contending with the madness beyond our gates. The last twelve months shall be remembered as a year of pioneering.

We experimented with ways of providing Indigenous people far greater autonomy over Boundless programs. They chose to encircle their young people in culture, tradition and their communities. They opted for a multi-generational approach, using the land, the rivers and feasting on our organic garden.

Urban Indigenous people need far greater and easier access to their land. We learned that this is a priority for Boundless moving forward. To be that link.

Speaking of land, we sowed many literal seeds in an organic garden. We planted trees. We sweated out the creation of new trails. Our plan is to re-wild our 600-acre gem in the Madawaska Valley, so marginalized people can enjoy it for centuries.

We looked closely on why Boundless is an effective mental health program. We hired a researcher. Her report is out soon. We began to understand that yanking kids out of bed may be the single most effective therapeutic approach out there. And doing so with love and a relentless investment in making authentic connections.

Finally, 2023/2024 was a time where we re-focussed our operations to work with a much greater number of the neediest youth. This meant diminishing our social enterprise to make room. We were concerned the loss of revenue would threaten a balanced budget. We needn't have worried. Donations carried the day, exactly as we had hoped.

BY THE NUMBERS

	<u>2021/2022</u>	<u>2022/2023</u>	<u>2023/2024</u>
Total Students served	264	317	364
Total Student Days Delivered	6415	7728	8814
Student Completion Rate All Programs	95%	96%	95%
Behavioural Incidents	218	243	277
Serious Health and Safety Incidents	0	2	0
Students Completing Full Diploma at Boundless	54	63	64
Increase in English curriculum grades compared to public school scores	38%	31%	29%
Increase in Math and Science grades compared to public school scores	38%	41%	44%
Number of Indigenous Students	108	122	131
Budget Surplus/Deficit exclusive to Youth Programming	\$136,000	\$84,000	\$30,000

PROFILES OF OUR STUDENTS BEFORE ARRIVING AT BOUNDLESS

- 100% of our students had achieved credits below their grade level
- 100% experienced long-term school interruptions
- 12% had been suspended or expelled
- 36% identified as Indigenous
- 100% presented diagnosed mental health and learning challenges
- 97% reported significant familial dysfunction
- 13% had criminal histories
- 100% reported as low-income

OUR COMMUNITY PARTNERS

- 1) Native Canadian Centre of Toronto
- 2) Native Child and Family Services of Toronto
- 3) Inuuqatigiit Centre for Inuit Children, Youth and Families
- 4) Toronto Catholic School board
- 5) Renfrew County School Board – Indigenous programs
- 6) Central Toronto Youth Services
- 7) Michael Garron Hospital Anxiety Clinic
- 8) Ottawa Children’s Aid Society
- 9) Renfrew County Child and Family Services
- 10) Mind Forward Acquired Brain Injury Services
- 11) Ottawa Carlton District School Board



HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE PAST YEAR

- We experienced behavioural incidents galore, but every student returned home safely
- While the results of our research report shall be issued shortly, we found that behavioural activation, strong connections with teachers and physical fitness are having a transformational impact on students' mental health
- We launched a new multi-generational program for urban Indigenous people. Its success can be measured by the fact that a tripling of scale of this initiative is planned for 2024
- A reduction of our reliance on seasonal staff, a greater emphasis on full time hires and a stronger focus on engaging older and more experienced teachers proved to be an effective strategy on navigating the H.R. crisis. Strong leadership remained at Boundless despite palpable concerns otherwise
- A bevy of new curriculum options were introduced to combat the immediate impact of climate change (restrictions due to forest fires of shockingly low water levels)
- Despite concerns otherwise, our whitewater program continued to function
- Our budget and balance sheet remained healthy, despite the erosion of our social enterprise. We served more of the neediest youth than ever in our history
- Donations grew and proved to be a viable way of funding core programs
- Trust, a commodity that is the backbone of working with people from diverse cultures, deepened, and resulted in ambitious partnerships planned for the next ten years. We have a strong vision emerging that Boundless shall provide land-based learning opportunities for urban based Indigenous youth, their families and all caregivers

LOWLIGHTS

- Our staff and students may very well be the most ineffective tree planters in the history of arboriculture. 80% of the planted trees didn't make it. It is tough to integrate this activity with core curriculum and class time. It's easy to plant them, but watering them is another story. We have to do better next year by ascribing more time to this, and not be hesitant about competing with indoor class time
- The H.R challenges continue. For example, our program manager is pregnant and we lose her for one year. Who is there to replace her? More emphasis on land-based learning means less time on the river, which means less time to train staff, which results in fewer qualified river guides, which means river trips are becoming rarer. There are moments we feel our staff model is held together by duct tape. Incessant Covid didn't help either this past year
- Until about 2012, we promoted Boundless by emphasizing that our program is about taking kids beyond their comfort zones - that challenge is a necessary condition to building resilience. But today's emphasis on child-centred learning with its accompanying focus on making individual accommodations has meant that youth and their caregivers don't want challenge so much as they want their kids to be in a "safe space". We have no choice but to adapt, prompting the question as to whether our core challenge-based approach is becoming out of vogue.
- Re-wilding our conservation area is far more expensive that we reckoned. We don't have enough funding to pursue our lofty goals. How alluring is it to raise money to take down 4kms of a cattle fence to restore the land to its natural state? We are squeamish about approaching donors to sponsor projects that aren't as enticing as supporting youth. We must learn to present our needs in a more coherent way to potential donors.
- Angry parents presented the threat of litigation often this past year. If a student is expelled for, as an example, uttering threats to others; parents, instead of focussing on how to address this aggression, threaten to make a call to a lawyer. No formal litigation was launched, but we feel always on the defensive.

OUR PLANS FOR THE YEAR AHEAD

- Increasing services to 400 youth, resulting in the necessary further reduction of our social enterprise to 20% of what it was pre-Covid
- Expansion of Toronto and Ottawa based multi-generation programs. We are excited to include a new Indigenous partner - Rama First Nation. We shall be engaged in close partnerships with new Knowledge Keepers and Elders. Programs shall expand to serve up to 50 people at a time
- We are reintroducing programs for people with intellectual disabilities (we have not served that population since the mid 1990's). Our land-based programs beckon this community
- More planted trees. More land remediation. More nature based curriculum
- Continued efforts to save the whitewater program by relying on alumni to provide essential guidance
- We look forward to publishing the results of our recent research project
- Continue running the best long-term, land-based school in the country for marginalized youth





FINANCIAL REPORT FOR THE 12 MONTH EDUCATION PROGRAM
ENDING MARCH 31, 2024

EXPENSES EXCLUSIVE TO OUR YOUTH PROGRAM

	Year Ending March 31, 2022	Year Ending March 31, 2023	Year Ending March 31, 2024
Teachers and Staff	1,260,000	1,314,000	1,270,000
Travel	34,000	39,000	37,000
Insurance	74,000	77,000	79,000
Program/Educational Expenses	394,000	380,000	359,000
Admin	25,000	25,000	23,000
Total	1,787,000	1,835,000	1,768,000

REVENUE

	Year Ending March 31, 2022	Year Ending March 31, 2023	Year Ending March 31, 2024
Donations to youth program	848,000	812,000	970,000
Revenue from Boundless Social Enterprise	560,000	592,000	313,000
Central Toronto Youth Service Contract	515,000	515,000	515,000
TOTAL	1,923,000	1,919,000	1,798,000
Surplus (Deficit)	136,000	84,000	30,000

PROJECTED SERVICE TARGETS 2024/2025

	2022/2023 (Actual)	2023/2024 (Actual)	2024/2025 (Target)
Total Youth Served	317	364	420
Total Student Days Delivered	7728	8814	10,000
Indigenous Youth Participants	122	131	200
Indigenous Student Days Delivered	2860	2860	4350